

**Connecticut General Assembly
Labor and Public Employees Committee
January 31, 2013**

**TESTIMONY FOR PUBLIC HEARING:
Senate Bill 387 and House Bill 5713**

Senator Osten, Representative Tercyak, ranking members, and members of the Labor & Public Employees committee. My name is Patrice Peterson. I am a resident of West Hartford, and the President of CSEA SEIU Local 2001. I come before this committee to testify in support of Senate Bill 387, An Act Increasing the Minimum Fair Wage, and House Bill 5713, An Act Concerning the Inclusion of Labor History in the Public School Curriculum.

Senate Bill 387, An Act Increasing the Minimum Fair Wage.

As the president of a labor union, I know the importance of raising the minimum wage. It's simple economics. When you put more money into the pockets of working men and women, they will spend it in their communities, providing a needed boost for our struggling economy and creating beneficial ripple effects across Connecticut. Increased economic activity leads to greater tax revenue for the state, leading to smaller budget deficits, and hopefully budget surpluses down the road. In short, we all benefit. We support S.B. No. 387 and encourage you to do the same.

House Bill 5713, An Act Concerning the Inclusion of Labor History in the Public School Curriculum

For anyone who believes that teaching history is important, supporting H.B. No. 5713 should be obvious. We teach history for a reason; learning about the past is fundamental to understanding the present; and what could have a more direct impact on students than the world of work? Organized labor in America has been one of the most important forces shaping this country and the daily lives of working men and women. If you wanted to understand why we have a 40 hour work week, child labor laws, or even a middle class, you could never really understand any of it without discussing the history of organized labor. It is an empowering history of working men & women standing up for their rights and demanding better for themselves and their families. With this additional curriculum, students will be better prepared to enter the workforce. We encourage you to support this important addition to our student's knowledge base.

I respectfully urge you to support Senate Bill 387 and House Bill 5713.

Thank you.

Patrice Peterson
President, CSEA SEIU Local 2001